

CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME
Eastern Sierra & Inland Deserts Region

DEER ZONE D12
Deer Hunting Information

This information has been prepared to assist you in getting ready for your hunt after you have received a general season deer tag for Zone D12. All hunters should be familiar with regulations in the current CALIFORNIA HUNTING REGULATIONS (MAMMALS AND FURBEARERS) booklet available online at the Department of Fish and Game's website: www.dfg.ca.gov/licensing/biggame/biggamehunting.html. This booklet contains important information on zone boundaries, tag quotas, hunting seasons, bag limits, and special conditions. Laws, designed to conserve wildlife and provide an equitable distribution of game animals, are expected to encourage hunter ethics. Those who know and understand the rules can expect an enjoyable hunting experience. Articles on big game hunting and information about how to apply for deer tags may be found in the current year's BIG GAME HUNTING booklet available where hunting licenses are sold or online at www.dfg.ca.gov/licensing/biggame/biggamehunting.html.

LAND STATUS: Zone D12 is located in eastern Imperial, Riverside and San Bernardino counties, in the most southeastern part of California. The zone is bounded by the California/Arizona border on the east and the US/Mexico border on the south. It is an ecologically diverse zone comprised of numerous desert plant communities ranging from desert dunes and desert scrub to riparian forests and Joshua tree woodlands. The majority of the zone consists of public land managed by the U. S. Bureau of Land Management (BLM), telephone (760) 337-4400. Fourteen wilderness areas are found within the zone. Hunting is allowed in these wilderness areas, but vehicles are not. In addition there are numerous private holdings throughout the zone, which may or may not be posted. Hunter access is off limits in the West Chocolate Mountain Ariel Gunnery Range located in northern Imperial County, as well as the Joshua Tree National Park located in Riverside County.

ACCESS: There are a number of roadways available to access Zone D12. In the north, the zone is bounded by State Highway 62 and US Highway 95, both of which provide access to improved and unimproved roads. Access roads in the northern areas of the zone include the Havasu Landing Road, State Highway 62, US Highway 95, and the Rice Valley Road, which is partially paved. Interstate Highway 10 runs east/west through the zone, while State Highway 78 run south and west through the zone and provide access to several maintained dirt roads such as Milpitas Wash and the Bradshaw Trail. In the extreme southern end of the zone, Ogilby Road runs south from State Highway 78 to US Highway 8 and provides access to Indian Pass Road as well as the Hyduke Mine Road. The zone is bounded on the east by Highway 111. Throughout the zone numerous unimproved dirt roads provide good access, but it is strongly suggested that the open route maps be obtained from BLM prior to venturing into the zone to avoid any conflicts.

MAPS: A map showing land ownership is available online at www.dfg.ca.gov/hunting/deer/deer_maps.html. For information on land uses and desert access guides, contact the BLM El Centro Office at 1661 S. 4th St. El Centro, CA 92243, telephone (760) 337-4400. BLM maps and access guides of use to D12 hunters include: Yuma, Trigo Mountains, Salton Sea, and El Centro. The "Southern California Atlas and Gazetteer" by DeLorme Mapping Company, available at bookstores or call (207) 846-7000 to order, provides a good, large-scale overview of roads within the zone boundaries. More detail is provided in USGS topographical

maps, available at specialty stores such as camping and hiking products retailers, or directly from the U.S. Geological Distribution Center, Denver Federal Center, Building 810, Box 25286, Denver CO 80225, telephone (303) 236-7477. BLM Wilderness Area maps can be obtained from the El Centro field office (760) 337- 4400 or from the internet at http://www.ca.blm.gov/caso/wild_blm_ca.html.

TRAVEL TIPS: Zone D12 encompasses a large geographic area with topography ranging from flat in the lower elevation to extremely steep and rocky in the mountain ranges. Most services are located within the various cities and towns scattered along the main highways, including Needles, Blythe, Brawley, El Centro, and Yuma, Arizona. Hunters are advised to have full gasoline tanks when entering the field and to carry a shovel, serviceable spare tire, and extra food and water. Four-wheel-drive vehicles are strongly recommended and should be used when traveling on unimproved roads and sandy desert washes within the zone. Be sure to use extra caution when driving off-road, and check with BLM regarding any vehicle travel restrictions that may be in place.

WEATHER: During general hunting season in November, usually pleasant conditions prevail, but occasional warm or cold temperatures can occur and some light rain.

CAMPING: Most of the area is open for camping but hunters should check with BLM for restrictions. Camping adjacent to springs or other water sources is not allowed. Such precious spots provide important watering sites for wildlife. Human presence within 200 yards of a wildlife water source for more than 30 minutes is a violation of Fish and Game laws.

WHERE TO FIND DEER: While population trends remain stable, these are desert mule deer and the number of bucks taken is usually low. Hunter success remains around 3 to 5 percent. Nevertheless, a few trophy bucks are taken each year. Deer are usually dispersed throughout the zone but are most commonly found in washes that contain iron wood and palo verde vegetation. After opening day of the season and due to hunter pressure, some deer may move into the mountains and rocky areas. The bulk of D12 deer are taken south of Interstate 10, and a small number of deer are harvested in the Whipple Mountains and Riverside Mountains north of Interstate 10.

CONTACT INFORMATION: If you have further questions, telephone: (760) 922-4686.